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ADDITIONAL ANALOGUES OF "THE WRIGHT'S CHASTE WIFE."

By W. A. CLOUSTON.

The numerous versions of this old and wide-spread story should be divided into two groups: I. Those in which there is a test of chastity, and the lovers are entrapped; II. Those in which there is no such test, but the suitors are (*a*) entrapped, or (*b*) engaged to perform unpleasant or dangerous tasks.

I. It is probable that some oral version of *The Wright's Chaste Wife* suggested to Massinger the plot of his comedy of *The Picture* (printed in 1630): Mathias, a Bohemian knight, about to go to the wars, expresses to his confidant Baptista, a great scholar, his fears lest his wife Sophia, on whom he doated fondly, should prove unfaithful during his absence. Baptista gives him a picture of his wife, saying:

> "Carry it still about you, and as oft
> As you desire to know how she's affected,
> With curious eyes peruse it. While it keeps
> The figure it has now entire and perfect
> She is not only innocent in fact
> But unattempted; but if once it vary
> From the true form, and what's now white and red
> Incline to yellow, rest most confident
> She's with all violence courted, but unconquered;
> But if it turn all black, 'tis an assurance
> The fort by composition or surprise
> Is forced, or with her free consent surrendered."

On the return of Mathias from the wars, he is loaded with rich gifts by Honoria, the wife of his master Ferdinand, king of Hungary; and when he expresses his desire to return to his fair and virtuous wife, Honoria asks him if his wife is as fair as she, upon which he shows her the picture. The queen resolves to win his love—merely to gratify her own vanity—and persuades him to remain a month at court. She then despatches two libertine courtiers to attempt the virtue of Mathias' wife. They tell her Mathias is given to the

society of strumpets—moreover, not young, but old and ugly ones; so poor Sophia begins to waver. Meanwhile the queen makes advances to Mathias, which at first he rejects; but afterwards, seeing a change in his wife's picture, he consents, when the queen says she will think over it and let him know her decision. Sophia, at first disposed to entertain her suitors' proposals, on reflection determines to punish their wickedness; and, pretending to listen favourably to one of them, she causes him to be stripped to his shirt and locked in a room, where he is compelled to spin flax (like the suitors in our story), or go without food. The other fares no better, and the play concludes with the exposure of the libertines to the king and queen, their attendants, and the lady's husband.

The 69th chapter of the continental *Gesta Romanorum* (translated by Swan) is to the following effect:[1] A carpenter receives from his mother-in-law a shirt, having the wonderful quality of remaining unsoiled so long as he and his wife were faithful to each other. The emperor, who had employed him in the erection of a palace, is astonished to observe his shirt always spotless, and asks him the cause of it; to which he replies, that it is a proof of his wife's unsullied virtue. A soldier, having overheard this, sets off to attempt the wife's chastity, but she contrives to lock him in a room, where she keeps him on bread and water. Two other soldiers successively visit her on the same errand, and share their comrade's fate. When the carpenter has finished his job, he returns home and shows the unsullied shirt to his wife, who in her turn exhibits to him the three soldiers, whom he sets free on their promising to reform their ways.

The general resemblance of our story to this *Gesta* version does not, I think, render it therefore certain, or even probable, that the latter is the source whence it was derived; since a test similar to that of the Garland (for which a shirt is substituted in the *Gesta*) occurs both in the Indian original and in an intermediate Persian form, which is of Indian extraction.

In the celebrated Persian story-book, Nakhshabí's *Túti Náma* (Tales of a Parrot), written about A.D. 1306, the wife of a soldier, on his leaving home to enter the service of a nobleman, gives him a nosegay which, she tells him, would remain in full bloom while she was faithful to him. After some time, the nobleman inquired of the soldier how he managed to procure a fresh nosegay every day in mid-winter, and was informed that its perennial bloom betokened his

[1] Here given somewhat more fully than in the additional postscript to the Preface to the second edition of *The Wright's Chaste Wife*, 1869.

wife's chastity. The nobleman sends one of his cooks to try to form an intimacy with the soldier's wife, but she craftily entraps him. A second cook is despatched to learn the fate of the first, and meets with a similar reception. At last the nobleman himself sets off with his attendants—among whom was the soldier—to visit the chaste wife. He is received by her with great courtesy, and his two cooks, dressed as female slaves, are made by the wife to wait upon him at supper. The happy soldier then returns his wife the nosegay, fresh and blooming as ever.

The oldest form of the story yet known is found in the great Sanskrit collection entitled *Kathá Sarit Ságara*[1] (Book II., ch. 13): A merchant named Guhasena is compelled to leave his wife, Devasmitá, for a season, on important business matters. The separation is very painful to both, and the pain is aggravated by fears on the wife's part of her husband's inconstancy. To make assurance doubly sure, Siva was pleased to appear to them in a dream, and giving them two red lotuses, the god said to them: "Take each of you one of these lotuses in your hand; and if either of you shall be unfaithful during your separation, the lotus in the hand of the other shall fade, but not otherwise." The husband set out on his journey, and arriving in the country of Katáha he began to buy and sell jewels there. Four young merchants, learning the purport of his lotus and the virtue of his wife, set off to put it to the proof. On reaching the city where the chaste Devasmitá resided, they bribe a female ascetic to corrupt the lady, so she goes to her house, and adopting the device of the little she-dog—see ch. xxviii. of Swan's *Gesta Romanorum*,[2]—which she pretends is her own co-wife in a former birth, re-born in that degraded form, because she had been over-chaste, and warns Devasmitá that such should also be her fate if she did not "enjoy herself" during her husband's absence. The wise Devasmitá said to herself: "This is a novel conception of duty; no doubt this woman has laid a treacherous snare for me," and so she said to the ascetic: "Reverend lady, for this long time I have been ignorant of this duty, so procure me an interview with some agreeable man." Then the

[1] 'Ocean of the Streams of Story,' written in Sanskrit verse, by Somadeva, towards the end of the 11th century, after a similar work, the *Vrihat Ka'há*, 'Great Story,' by Gunadhya, 6th century, of which no copy has hitherto been discovered. A complete translation of Somadeva's work, by Professor C. H. Tawney, with useful notes of variants and derivatives of the tales, has lately been published, in two vols., large 8vo, at Calcutta.

[2] Taken into the *Gesta*, probably from the *Disciplina Clericalis* of P. Alfonsus. The incident is also the subject of a *fabliau*, and occurs in all the Eastern versions of the *Book of Sindibád*.

ascetic said: "There are residing here some young merchants, who have come from a distant country, so I will bring them to you." The crafty old hag returns home delighted with the success of her stratagem. In the meantime Devasmitá resolves to punish the four young merchants. So calling her maids, she instructs them to prepare some wine mixed with *datura* (a stupefying drug), and to have a dog's foot of iron made as soon as possible. Then she causes one of her maids to dress herself to resemble her mistress. The ascetic introduces one of the young libertines into the lady's house in the evening, and then returns home. The maid, disguised as her mistress, receives the young merchant with great courtesy, and, having persuaded him to drink freely of the drugged wine till he became senseless, the other women strip off his clothes, and, after branding him on the forehead with the dog's foot, during the night push him into a filthy ditch. On recovering consciousness he returns to his companions, and tells them, in order that they should share his fate, that he had been robbed on his way home. The three other merchants in turn visit the house of Devasmitá, and receive the same treatment. Soon afterwards the pretended devotee, ignorant of the result of her device, visits the lady, is drugged, her ears and nose are cut off, and she is flung into a foul pond. In the sequel, Devasmitá, disguised in man's apparel, proceeds to the country of the young libertines, where her husband had been residing for some time, and, going before the king, petitions him to assemble all his subjects, alleging that there are among the citizens four of her slaves who had run away. Then she seizes upon the four young merchants, and claims them as her slaves. The other merchants indignantly cried out that these were reputable men, and she answered that if their foreheads were examined they would be found marked with a dog's foot. On seeing the four young men thus branded, the king was astonished, and Devasmitá thereupon related the whole story, and all the people burst out laughing, and the king said to the lady: "They are your slaves by the best of titles." The other merchants paid a large sum of money to the chaste wife to redeem them from slavery, and a fine to the king's treasury. And Devasmitá received the money, and recovered her husband; was honoured by all men, returned to her own city, and was never afterwards separated from her beloved.

Tests of chastity such as those in the above stories are very common in our old European romances. In *Amadis de Gaul* it is a garland; in *Perce Forest* it is a rose, which, borne by a wife or a

maiden of immaculate virtue, retains its bloom, but withers if the wearer is unchaste. In *Tristram*, *Perceval*, *La Morte d'Arthur*, and *Ariosto*, the test is a cup, the wine in which is spilled by the unfaithful lover or wife who attempts to drink from it. In one of the *fabliaux* of the northern minstrels of France the test is a mantle, 'Le Manteau mal taille': an English rendering of this, entitled 'The Boy and the Mantle,' is found in Percy's *Reliques*. And in Spenser we have the girdle of Florimel.

II. To the first subdivision (*a*) of the second group of variants, in which there is no test of chastity, but the suitors are entrapped, belongs the *fabliau* in Barbazan, tom. iii., of 'Constant du Hamel, ou la Dame qui atrappa un Prêtre, un Prévost, et un Forestier,' an abstract of which will be found in the original notes to our story; also the old ballad of *The Friar well-fitted*, of which some account is furnished by Dr Furnivall in an additional Postscript to his Preface (Second Edition, 1869).[1]

In an imperfect MS. text of the *Book of the Thousand and One Nights*, brought from Constantinople by Wortley Montagu, and now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, there are two versions: Nights 726-728, 'The Lady of Cairo and her Three Gallants,' and Nights 738-743, 'The Virtuous Woman of Cairo and her Four Suitors.' Dr Jonathan Scott has given a translation of the second of these in the sixth volume of his edition of the *Arabian Nights:* The lady is solicited by the judge, the collector-general of port-duties, the chief of the butchers, and a rich merchant. She makes an assignation with each

[1] For members of the E. E. T. S. who possess only the 1865 edition, it may be as well to reproduce Dr Furnivall's note here:

"With *The Wright's Chaste Wife* may also be compared the ballad of '*The Fryer well-fitted;* or

A Pretty jest that once befel,
How a maid put a Fryer to cool in the well,'

printed 'in the Bagford Collection; in the Roxburghe (ii, 172); the Pepys (iii. 145); the Douce (p. 85); and in *Wit and Mirth, an Antidote to Melancholy*, 8vo, 1682, also, in an altered form, in *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, 1707, i. 340, or 1719, iii. 325'; and the tune of which, with an abstract of the story, is given in Chappell's *Popular Music*, i. 273-5. The Friar makes love to the maid; she refuses him for fear of hell-fire.

Tush, quoth the Friar, thou needest not doubt;
If thou wert in Hell, I could sing thee out.

So she consents if he'll bring her an angel of money. He goes home to fetch it, and she covers the well with a cloth. When he comes back and has given her the money, she pretends that her father is coming, tells the Friar to run behind the cloth, and down he flops into the well. She won't help him at first, because if he could sing her out of hell, he could clearly sing himself out of the well: but at last she does help him out, keeps his money because he's dirtied the water, and sends him home dripping along the street like a new-washed sheep."

at her own house—of course at different hours—and acquaints her husband of her plan to punish them, and at the same time reap some profit. The judge comes first, and presents her with a rosary of pearls. She makes him undress, and put on a robe of yellow muslin, and a parti-coloured cap—her husband all the time looking at him through an opening in the door of a closet. Presently a loud knock is heard at the street-door, and on the pretence that it is her husband, the judge is pushed into an adjoining room. The three other suitors, as they successively arrive, bring each a valuable present, and are treated in like manner. The husband now enters, and the lady tells him—to the consternation, doubtless, of the imprisoned suitors—that in returning from the bazaar she had met four antic fellows, whom she had a great mind to bring home with her for his amusement. He affects to be vexed that she had not done so, since he must go from home to-morrow. The lady then says they are, after all, in the next room, upon which the husband insists on their being brought before him, one after another. So the judge is dragged forth in his absurd attire, and compelled to caper like a buffoon, after which he is made to tell a story, and is then dismissed. The others, having in turn gone through a similar performance, are also sent packing.

There is another Arabian version in the famous romance of the *Seven Vazírs*, which now forms part of the *Thousand and One Nights*. The wife of a merchant, during one of his journeys of business, had a young man as a substitute, who happened one day to be engaged in a street brawl, and was apprehended by the police. She dressed herself in her richest apparel, and repaired to the walí, or chief of the police, and begged him to release her 'brother,' who was her only protector, and against whom hired witnesses had sworn falsely. The walí, seeing her great beauty, consents, on condition that she should receive him at her house. She appoints a certain evening, and the walí, enraptured, gives her twenty dínars (about ten pounds of our money), saying, "Expend this at the bath;" and so she left the walí with his heart busy thinking of all her charms. In like manner—to be brief—the lady arranges with the kází, or judge, the vazír, or minister of state, and the hájib, or city governor, that they should come to her the same evening, appointing, of course, a different hour for each. She then goes to a joiner, and desires him to make her a large cabinet with four compartments. The poor craftsman, also smitten with her beauty, asks, as his only reward, that he should be permitted to spend an evening with her. "In that case," says she, "you must make a fifth compartment," and appointed an

hour for him to visit her, the same evening she had fixed for the four city officials. When the walí arrived, she feasted him abundantly, then taking off his robes, dressed him in gay-coloured clothes, and plied him with wine till he was intoxicated; and when he had written an order to the jailor to release the young man, lo! there was a loud knocking at the gate. "Who is coming?" asks the walí, in alarm. "It is my husband," replies the lady; "get into this cabinet, and I will return presently and let you out." Thus, as they came, the crafty lady entraps the four dignitaries and the poor joiner. Having sent a servant to the prison with the walí's order, her lover soon arrived, and they both set off for another city, with all the valuables they could carry. In the morning the landlord of the house, finding the gate open, entered, and hearing voices from the cabinet was alarmed, and summoned the neighbours. The cabinet was carried to the palace of the sultan, who sent for carpenters and smiths, and caused it to be broken open, when lo! he discovered the walí, the kází, the vazír, the hájib, and the poor joiner in their fantastic dresses. And the sultan laughed till he almost fainted, and commanded the story to be written from first to last. Search was made for the lady and her lover, but they were never discovered.[1]

In the Persian romance entitled *Bahár-i Dánish*, or 'Spring of Knowledge,' by Ináyatu-'llah of Delhi, a lady named Gohera, whose husband was in the hands of the police, makes assignations with the kôtwal (chief of police) and the kází, one of whom is entrapped in a great jar, the other in a chest; and next morning she causes porters to carry them before the sultan, who orders them to be punished, and her husband to be set at liberty. And in the Persian tales of the 'Thousand and One Days' (*Hazár-yek Rúz*), by Mukhlis, of Ispahán (Day 146 ff.), Arúya, the virtuous wife of a merchant, entraps, with her husband's sanction, a judge, a doctor, and the city governor.

The story is known, in various forms, throughout India, where, indeed, it had its origin. In the *Indian Antiquary*, 1873, there is a translation by G. H. Damant, of a folk-tale of Dinajpur, entitled 'The Touchstone,' in the concluding portion of which a young woman consents to receive at her house the kôtwal at the first watch of the night; the king's counsellor at the second watch; the king's minister at the third watch; and the king himself at the fourth watch. She smears the kôtwal with molasses, pours water on him, covers his whole body with cotton wool, and then secures him near the window.

[1] In the Bodleian MS. of *The Nights* referred to above, this story is told separately from the *Seven Vazírs*.—*Nights*, 726—728.

The counsellor is hidden under a mat; the minister behind a bamboo-screen; and when the king comes, last of all, and sees the frightful figure of the kôtwal in the window, he asks what it is, and she replies that it is a rákshasa (a species of demon), upon which the king, minister, and counsellor flee from the house in dread of the monster. The kôtwal is then released, and makes the best of his way home in his hideous condition.

In Miss Stokes' charming *Indian Fairy Tales* (No. 28), a merchant's clever wife, during his absence, takes four hanks of thread to the bazaar to sell, and is accosted in turn by the kôtwal, the vazír, the kází, and the king, to each of whom she grants an interview at her house, at different hours, and contrives to entrap them into chests. In the morning she hires four stout coolies, who take the chests on their backs, and proceeding to the houses of her suitors, disposes of them to their sons for various sums of money, telling each that the chest contained something he would value far beyond the sum she asked. A very similar Bengalí version, 'Adi's Wife,' is given by Damant in the *Indian Antiquary*," vol. ix. p. 2. And there is a curious variant in Narrain Sawmy's *Select Tamil Tales*, Madras, 1839, in which Ramakistnan (an Indian Scogin or Tyl Eulenspiegel) entraps the rája and his domestic chaplain, whom he induces to disguise themselves as women, on the pretext that he would introduce them to the beautiful wife of a man who had lately come to lodge at his house. The jester having locked them, one after the other, in the same room, when they recognize each other they are much ashamed, and softly request to be let out, but this Ramakistnan does only after they have solemnly promised to forgive him a hundred offences every day.

We now come to a second Sanskrit form of the story in the *Kathá Sarit Ságara* (Book I. ch. 4), from which the foregoing Indian, Persian, and Arabian versions have evidently been adapted or imitated. The storyteller, Vararuchi, relates that before proceeding to Himálaya to propitiate Siva with austerities, he deposited in the hand of the merchant Hiranyadatta all his wealth for the maintenance of his family during his absence, at the same time informing his wife Upakosá of it, and he thus proceeds:

"Upakosá, on her part anxious for my success, remained in her own house, bathing every day in the Ganges, strictly observing her vow. One day, when spring had come, she being still beautiful, though thin and slightly pale, and charming to the eyes of men, like the streak of the new moon, was seen by the king's domestic chaplain

while going to bathe in the Ganges, and also by the head magistrate, and by the prince's minister; and immediately they all became a target for the arrows of love. It happened, too, somehow or other, that she took a long time bathing that day, and as she was returning in the evening, the prince's minister laid violent hands on her; but she with great presence of mind said to him: 'Dear sir, I desire this as much as you, but I am of respectable family, and my husband is away from home. How can I act thus? Some one might perhaps see us, and then misfortune would befall you as well as me. Therefore you must come without fail to my house in the first watch of the night of the spring-festival, when the citizens are all excited [and will not observe you].' When she had said this, and pledged herself, he let her go; but as chance would have it, she had not gone many steps further before she was stopped by the king's domestic chaplain. She made a similar assignation with him also, for the second watch of the same night; and so he too was, though with difficulty, induced to let her go. But after she had gone a little further, up comes a third person, the head magistrate, and detains the trembling lady. Then she made a similar assignation with him also, for the third watch of the same night; and having by great good fortune got him to release her, she went home all trembling. Of her own accord she told her handmaids the arrangements she had made, reflecting, 'Death is better for a woman of good family, when her husband is away, than to meet the eyes of people who lust after beauty.' Full of these thoughts and regretting me, the virtuous lady spent that night in fasting, lamenting her own beauty.

"Early the next morning she sent a maidservant to the merchant Hiranyadatta to ask for some money in order that she might honour the Bráhmans. Then that merchant also came, and said to her in private: 'Show me love, and then I will give you what your husband deposited.' When she heard that, she reflected that she had no witness to prove the deposit of her husband's wealth, and perceived that the merchant was a villain; and so, tortured with sorrow and grief, she made a fourth and last assignation with him for the last watch of the same night; and so he went away. In the meanwhile she had prepared by her handmaids, in a large vat, lamp-black mixed with oil and scented with musk and other perfumes, and she made ready four pieces of rag anointed with it, and she caused to be made a large trunk with a fastening outside.

"So on that day of the spring-festival the prince's minister came in the first watch of the night in gorgeous array. When he had

entered without being observed, Upakosá said to him: 'I will not receive you until you have bathed; so go in and bathe.' The simpleton agreed to that, and was taken by the handmaids into a secret, dark inner apartment. There they took off his under-garments and his jewels, and gave him by way of an under-garment a single piece of rag, and they smeared the rascal from head to foot with a thick coating of that lamp-black and oil, pretending it was an unguent, without his detecting it. While they continued rubbing it into every limb, the second watch of the night came, and the chaplain arrived; the handmaids thereupon said to the minister: 'Here is the king's chaplain come, a great friend of Vararuchi's, so creep into this box;' and they bundled him into the trunk, just as he was, all naked, with the utmost precipitation; and then they fastened it outside with a bolt. The priest too was brought inside into the dark room on the pretence of a bath, and was in the same way stripped of his garments and ornaments, and made a fool of by the handmaids by being rubbed with lamp-black and oil, with nothing but the piece of rag on him, until in the third watch the chief magistrate arrived. The handmaids immediately terrified the priest with the news of his arrival, and pushed him into the trunk like his predecessor. After they had bolted him in, they brought in the magistrate on the pretext of giving him a bath, and so he, like his fellows, with the piece of rag for his only garment, was bamboozled by being continually anointed with lamp-black, until in the last watch of the night the merchant arrived. The handmaids made use of his arrival to alarm the magistrate, and bundled him also into the trunk, and fastened it on the outside.

"So those three being shut up inside the box, as if they were bent on accustoming themselves to live in the hell of blind darkness, did not dare to speak on account of fear, though they touched one another. Then Upakosá brought a lamp into the room, and making the merchant enter it, said to him: 'Give me that money which my husband deposited with you.' When he heard that, the rascal, observing that the room was empty, said: 'I told you that I would give you the money your husband deposited with me.' Upakosá, calling the attention of the people in the trunk, said: 'Hear, O ye gods, this speech of Hiranyadatta.' When she had said this, she blew out the light; and the merchant, like the others, on the pretext of a bath was anointed by the handmaids for a long time with lamp-black. Then they told him to go, for the darkness was over, and at the close of the night they took him by the neck and pushed him out of the door sorely against his will. Then he made the best of his way home,

with only the piece of rag to cover his nakedness, and smeared with the black dye, with the dogs biting him at every step, thoroughly ashamed of himself, and at last reached his own house; and when he got there, he did not dare to look his slaves in the face while they were washing off that black dye. The path of vice is indeed a painful one.

"In the early morning, Upakosá, accompanied by her handmaids, went, without informing her parents, to the palace of King Nanda, and there herself stated to the king that the merchant Hiranyadatta was endeavouring to deprive her of money deposited with him by her husband. The king, in order to inquire into the matter, immediately had the merchant summoned, who said: 'I have nothing in my keeping belonging to this lady.' Upakosá then said: 'I have witnesses, my lord. Before he went, my husband put the household gods into a box, and this merchant with his own lips admitted the deposit in their presence. Let the box be brought here, and ask the gods yourself.' Having heard this, the king in astonishment ordered the box to be brought. Thereupon in a moment that trunk was carried in by many men. Then Upakosá said: 'Relate truly, O gods, what that merchant said, and then go to your houses: if you do not, I will burn you, or open the box in court.' Hearing that, the men in the box, beside themselves with fear, said: 'It is true, the merchant admitted the deposit in our presence.' Then the merchant, being utterly confounded, confessed all his guilt. But the king, being unable to restrain his curiosity, after asking permission of Upakosá, opened the chest there in court by breaking the fastening, and those three men were dragged out, looking like three lumps of solid darkness, and were with difficulty recognised by the king and his ministers. The whole assembly then burst out laughing, and the king in his curiosity asked Upakosá what was the meaning of this; so the virtuous lady told the whole story. All present in court expressed their approbation of Upakosá's conduct, observing: 'The virtuous behaviour of women of good family, who are protected by their own excellent disposition only,[1] is incredible.' Then all those coveters of their neighbour's wife were deprived of all their living and banished from the country. Who prospers by immorality? Upakosá was then dismissed by the king, who showed his great regard for her by a present of much wealth, and said to her: 'Henceforth thou art my sister;' and so she returned home."

[1] Instead of being confined in the zenana, or harem. Somadeva wrote before the Muhammadan conquest of India.

Such is the fine story of the virtuous Upakosá, according to Professor Tawney's translation, of which the Arabian version in the *Seven Vazírs* is a rather clumsy imitation. But before attempting a comparison of the several versions, there remain to be adduced those of the second subdivision (*b*) of the group in which there is no magical test of chastity, and to which belongs Lydgate's metrical tale of *The Lady Prioress and her Three Wooers*, an abstract of which is cited by Dr Furnivall in the original notes to our story.

If Lydgate did not adapt his tale from Boccaccio (*Decameron*, Day IX., Nov. 1), both versions must have been derived from a common source. Boccaccio's story is to this effect: A widow lady in Pistoia had two lovers, one called Rinuccio, the other Alexander, of whom neither was acceptable to her. At a time when she was harassed by their importunities, a person named Scannadio, of reprobate life and hideous aspect, died and was buried. His death suggested to the lady a mode of getting rid of her lovers, by asking them to perform a service which she thought herself certain they would not undertake. She acquainted Alexander that the body of Scannadio, for a purpose she would afterwards explain, was to be brought to her dwelling, and that, as she felt a horror at receiving such an inmate, she offered him her love if he would attire himself in the dead garments of Scannadio, occupy his place in the coffin, and allow himself to be conveyed to her house in his stead. To Rinuccio she sent to request that he would bring the corpse of Scannadio at midnight to her habitation. Both lovers, contrary to her expectation, agree to fulfil her desires. During the night she watches the event, and soon perceives Rinuccio coming along, bearing Alexander, who was equipped in the shroud of Scannadio. On the approach of some watchmen with a light, Rinuccio throws down his burden and runs off, while Alexander returns home in the dead man's clothes. Next day each demands the love of his mistress, which she refuses, pretending to believe that no attempt had been made to fulfil her commands (*Dunlop*). Lydgate's story is a very great improvement on this of the illustrious Florentine: the Lady Prioress pretends the "corpse" had been arrested for debt; and the adventures of her three suitors are ingeniously conceived, and told with much humour.

Under the title of 'The Wicked Lady of Antwerp and her Lovers,' Thorpe, in his *Northern Mythology*, gives a story which is cousin-german to those of Boccaccio and Lydgate: A rich woman in Antwerp led a very licentious life, and had four lovers, all of whom visited her in the evenings, but at different hours, so that no one

knew anything of the others. The Long Wapper[1] one night assumed the form of this lady. At ten o'clock came the first lover, and Long Wapper said to him: "What dost thou desire?"—"I desire you for a wife," said the spark.—"Thou shalt have me," replied the Wapper, "if thou wilt go instantly to the churchyard of our Lady, and there sit for two hours on the transverse of the great cross."—"Good," said he, "that shall be done," and he went and did accordingly. At half-past ten came the second. "What dost thou want?" asked the Long Wapper.—"I wish to marry you," answered the suitor.—"Thou shalt have me," replied the Wapper, "if thou wilt go previously to the churchyard of our Lady, there take a coffin, drag it to the foot of the great cross, and lay thyself in it till midnight."—"Good," said the lover, "that shall be done at once," and he went and did so. About eleven o'clock came the third. Him the Long Wapper commissioned to go to the coffin at the foot of the cross in our Lady's churchyard, to knock thrice on the lid, and to wait there till midnight. At half-past eleven came the fourth, and Wapper asked him what his wishes were. "To wed you," answered he.—"Thou shalt do so," replied Wapper, "if thou wilt take the iron chain in the kitchen, and dragging it after thee, run three times round the cross in the churchyard of our Lady."—"Good," said the spark, "that I will do." The first had set himself on the cross, but had fallen dead with fright to the earth on seeing the second place the coffin at his feet. The second died with fright when the third struck thrice on the coffin. The third fell down dead when the fourth came rattling his chain, and the fourth knew not what to think when he found his three rivals lying stiff and cold around the cross. With all speed he ran from the churchyard to the lady to tell her what had happened. But she, of course, knew nothing of the matter; when, however, on the following day, she was informed of the miserable death of her lovers, she put an end to her own life.

We have here a very curious and tragical version of the self-same story which the Monk of Bury—or whosoever was the author—has told so amusingly of the Lady Prioress and her Three Wooers. In the Far North, where our story is also current, magical arts are employed in punishment of importunate and objectionable suitors: In the latter part of the tale of 'The Mastermaid' (Dasent's *Popular Tales from the Norse*), the heroine takes shelter in the hut of a crabbed old crone, who is killed by an accident, and the maid

[1] A Flemish sprite, whose knavish exploits resemble those of our English Robin Goodfellow.—*Thorpe.*

is thus left alone. A constable, passing by, and seeing a beautiful girl at the window, falls in love with her, and having brought a bushel of money, she consents to marry him; but at night, just when they have got into bed, she says that she has forgot to make up the fire; this the doting bridegroom undertakes to do himself, but no sooner has he laid hold of the shovel, than she cries out: "May you hold the shovel, and the shovel hold you, and may you heap burning coals over yourself till morning breaks!" So there stood the constable all night, heaping coals of fire on his own head till day-break, when he was released from the spell, and ran home. In like manner, on the second night the damsel casts her spells over an attorney, who is made to hold the handle of the porch-door till morning; and on the third night the sheriff is compelled to hold the calf's-tail, and the calf's-tail to hold him, till morning breaks, when he goes home in sorry plight.—In an Icelandic version, the calf's-tail is the only device adopted by the young witch, but it proves equally efficacious for her purposes.

These are all the versions of this world-wide story with which I am at present acquainted: some of them are taken from the appendix to my privately-printed *Book of Sindibád*. Regarding the immediate source of Adam of Cobsam's diverting tale, I do not think that was the *Gesta* version, with which it corresponds only in outline; both were doubtless adapted independently from some orally-current form of the story. If we assume that the *Kathá Sarit Ságara* faithfully represents its prototype of the 6th century—the *Vrihat Kathá*—then for the elements of *The Wright's Chaste Wife* we must go to two different but cognate tales in that collection: for the garland as the test of chastity we have the lotus-flower in the story of Guhasena; and the entrapping of the suitors we find in the story of Upakosá. Of the Eastern versions cited, the prototype of *The Wright's Chaste Wife* is the story of the soldier's wife in the *Tútí Náma*—a work, it is true, which does not date earlier than A.D. 1306, but it was derived from a much older Persian work of the same description, which again was based upon a Sanskrit story-book, of which the *Suka Saptati* (Seventy Tales of a Parrot) is the modern representative. The two stories in the *Vrihat Kathá*—or rather, portions of them—seem thus to have been fused into one at an early date, and reached Europe in a form similar to the *Gesta* and Adam of Cobsam's versions. But the story of Upakosá also found its way to Europe separately, and not through the Arabian versions assuredly, since these are much later than the times of the Trouvères. Moreover, the

fabliau has preserved incidents of the Indian story, which are omitted in the Arabian versions, with comparatively little modification, namely: that of the bath—a common preliminary to farther intimacy in tales of gallantry; the smearing of the naked suitors with lamp-black and oil—they are 'feathered' in the *fabliau;* and the dogs snapping the heels of the roguish merchant.—That Boccaccio was not the inventor of his version seems evident, from the existence of analogous popular tales in Northern Europe. Be this as it may, Adam of Cobsam's story has furnished us with a curious illustration of Baring-Gould's remark: "How many brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins of all degrees a little story has! and how few of the tales we listen to can lay any claim to originality!"

Glasgow, *April 1886.*

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XXIII. Early English Pronunciation, Part IV., by A. J. Ellis, F.R.S. 10*s.*

The Publications for 1875 (*one guinea*) *are :—*

XXIV. Lonelich's History of the Holy Grail, Part II., ed. F. J. Furnivall, M.A. 10*s.*
XXV. Guy of Warwick, 15th-century Version, Part I., ed. Prof. Zupitza. 20*s.*

The Publications for 1876 (*one guinea*) *are :—*

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The Publications for 1877 (*one guinea*) *are :—*

XXVIII. Lonelich's Holy Grail, Part III., ed. F. J. Furnivall, M.A. 10*s.*
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The Publications for 1880 (*one guinea*) *are :—*

XXXV. Charlemagne Romances: No. II. The Sege off Melayne, ed. by S. J. Herrtage, B.A. 1
XXXVI. Charlemagne Romances: No. III. The Lyf of Charles the Grete, englisht by Caxto A.D. 1485, Part I., ed. by S. J. Herrtage, B.A. 16*s.*

The Publications for 1881 (*one guinea*) *are :—*

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XL. Charlemagne Romances :—7. Huon of Burdeux, by Lord Berners, ed. S. L. Lee, B.A. Part I. 1

The Publications for 1883 (*one guinea*) *are :*

XLI. Charlemagne Romances :—8. Huon of Burdeux, by Lord Berners, ed. S. L. Lee, B.A. Pt II. 1
XLII. Guy of Warwick, the Auchinleck and Caius MSS., Part I, ed. Prof. Zupitza. 15*s.*

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XLIII. Charlemagne Romances :—9. Huon of Burdeux, by Lord Berners, ed. S. L. Lee, B.A. Pt III. 1
XLIV. Charlemagne Romances :—10. The Four Sons of Aymon, by Caxton, ed. Miss O. Richards Part I. 15*s.*

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Charlemagne Romances :—11. The Four Sons of Aymon, by Caxton, ed. Miss O. Richardson. Part
Charlemagne Romances :—12. Huon of Burdeux, by Lord Berners, ed. S. L. Lee, B.A. Part III.
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Income and Expenditure of the EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY *for the Year ended December* 31, 1879.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
BALANCES, 1 January, 1879:—						
Cash at Bank	109	14	11			
Cash in hand		7	4	110	2	3
MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS:—						
Original Series { For back years	53	15	6			
For 1879	352	12	0			
For 1880, &c.	16	6	9			
Extra Series { For back years	38	19	1			
For 1879	228	1	1			
For 1880, &c.	4	15	9			
Reprints	5	8	8	699	18	10
				£810	1	1

PAYMENTS.

	£	s	d.	£	s.	d.
PRINTING ACCOUNT:—						
Original Series.						
No. 71. The Lay Folks Mass Book	279	8	0			
No. 72. Palladius on Husbondrie, Part II. ...	92	12	6			
Beowulf Autotypes [on account]	135	8	6	507	9	0
Extra Series.						
XXXIII. Gesta Romanorum [on account]				150	0	0
COPYING, COLLATING, AND INDEXING:—						
Original Series	42	11	4			
Extra Series	39	13	0	82	4	4
GENERAL ACCOUNT:—						
Binding	24	7	5			
Editor's journey to Cheltenham	5	0	0			
Postage, Carriage, and Stationery	8	1	5			
Clerk	10	0	0			
Insurance	2	10	0	49	18	10
BALANCE AT BANK, 31 December, 1879				20	8	11
				£810	1	1

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

FRED. D. MATTHEW,
ARTHUR G. SNELGROVE, } AUDITORS.

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Treasurer's Cash Account for 1879.

Income and Expenditure of the Early English Text Society *for the Year ended* 31 *December,* 1880.

RECEIPTS.

		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Balance at Bank 1st January, 1880					20	8	11
Members' Subscriptions:—							
Original Series	For back years	73	19	0			
	For 1880	394	3	1			
	For 1881, &c.	6	6	0			
		474	8	1			
	Less returned Subscription & commission on Sales	20	2	0	454	6	1
Extra Series	For back years	17	4	0			
	For 1880	244	16	9			
	For 1881, &c.	3	3	0			
		265	3	9			
	Less returned Subscription & commission on Sales	12	19	0	252	4	9
Reprints					5	5	0
					£732	4	9

PAYMENTS.

		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Printing Account:—							
Original Series.							
No. 73. Blickling Homilies, Part III.		61	10	11			
No. 74. Wyclif [on account]		200	0	0			
Messrs. Clay and Taylor [on account]		7	12	0	269	2	11
Extra Series.							
XXXIII. Gesta Romanorum [balance]		55	16	1			
XXXIV. Sir Ferumbras		113	13	4	169	9	5
Reprints, &c.							
No. 8. Morte Arthure		14	0	0			
Beowulf Autotypes [on account]		135	12	0			
Photographs, &c., of Sege off Melayne		22	2	0			
The Society's 11th Report, &c.		33	7	9	205	1	9
Copying and Collating:—							
Original Series		20	8	9			
Extra Series		12	7	0	32	15	9
General Account:—							
Binding		1	10	6			
Postage, Carriage, Stationery, &c.		7	9	8			
Clerk		10	0	0			
Insurance		2	10	0			
Warehousing Stock of Books, 1879		5	0	0	26	10	2
Balance at Bank, 31st December, 1880		29	3	1			
Petty Cash			1	8	29	4	9
					£732	4	9

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

February 8, 1881.

FRED. D. MATTHEW,
ARTHUR G. SNELGROVE, } Auditors.

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, Treasurer.
W. A. DALZIEL, Hon. Sec.

Income and Expenditure of the EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY *for the Year ended* 31 *December*, 1881.

RECEIPTS.

		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
BALANCE AT BANK 1st January, 1881:		29	3	1			
Cash in hand			1	8	29	4	9
MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS:—							
Original Series	For back years	65	14	0			
	For 1881	324	12	0			
	For 1882	2	2	0	392	8	0
Extra Series	For back years	52	9	11			
	For 1881	208	16	8			
	For 1882	3	3	0	264	9	7
					£686	2	4

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
PRINTING ACCOUNT:—						
Original Series.						
No. 74. Wyclif (balance)	42	0	0			
No. 75. Catholicon Anglicum	195	19	7			
,, ,, facsimiles	18	18	0			
No. 76. Aelfric's Met. Homilies. Part I. (on account)	30	0	0	286	17	7
Extra Series.						
XXXV. Sege off Melayne	81	16	0			
XXXVI. Charles the Grete, Pt I. (balance)	63	2	6			
XXXVII. ,, ,, Part II.	31	13	6			
XXXVIII. Sowdone of Babylone	73	3	9			
To Messrs. Clay and Taylor, on account	15	9	0	265	4	9
Reprints.						
No. 38. Piers Plowman, B	23	6	6			
No. I. William of Palerne	23	2	3			
Printing Sundries	17	18	6	64	7	3
GENERAL ACCOUNT:—						
Binding	18	1	7			
Warehousing Stock of Books, 1880—81	10	0	0			
Insurance of Stock of Books, 1881	2	10	0			
Clerk	10	0	0			
Collating	1	9	0			
Postage, Stationery, &c.	5	0	0	47	0	7
BALANCE AT BANK, 31st December, 1881				22	12	2
				£686	2	4

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

FRED. D. MATTHEW
A. GRANGER HUTT } AUDITORS.

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, TREASURER.
W. A. DALZIEL, HON. SEC.

Income and Expenditure of the EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY *for the Year ended December* 31, 1882.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
BALANCE AT BANK, 1st January, 1882 ...	...	...		22	12	2
MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS:—						
Original Series { For back years	63	6	0			
For 1882	344	8	11			
For 1883	2	2	0			
	409	16	11			
Less Returned Subscription and Commission on Sales ...	21	10	0	388	6	11
Extra Series { For back years	38	6	4			
For 1882	247	11	3			
	285	17	7			
Less Commission on Sales ...	12	6	0	273	11	7
Reprints	...	...		3	3	0
				£687	13	8

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
PRINTING ACCOUNT:—						
Original Series.						
No. 76. Aelfric's Lives of Saints (balance)	89	1	3			
No. 77. Beowulf	78	3	8			
No. 78. English Wills	87	7	9	254	12	8
Extra Series.						
III. Caxton's Book of Curtesye, 1868 ...	3	6	6			
XXXIX. Rauf Coilyear (balance) ...	41	10	6			
XL. Huon of Burdeux, Part I (on account)	131	18	6	176	15	6
Sundries	...	...		4	6	7
COPYING AND COLLATING:—						
Original Series	4	7	0			
Extra Series	36	1	9	40	8	9
GENERAL ACCOUNT:—						
Editor's Journeys	3	19	0			
Clerk	10	0	0			
Binding	2	6	9			
Insurance	2	10	0			
Postage, Carriage, Stationery, &c. ...	5	8	4			
Warehousing Stock, 1882	5	0	0	29	4	1
BALANCE AT BANK, 31st December, 1882 ...	181	14	6			
Petty Cash	0	11	7	182	6	1
				£687	13	8

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

FRED. D. MATTHEW
A. GRANGER HUTT } AUDITORS.

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, TREASURER.
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Income and Expenditure of the EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY *for the Year ended December* 31, 1883.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
BALANCE AT BANK, 1st January, 1883 ...	181	14	6			
Cash in hand	0	11	7			
				182	6	1
MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS:—						
Original Series { For back years ...	123	16	6			
For 1883	282	10	7			
For 1884	2	13	0			
	409	0	1			
Less Commission on Sales	19	2	0			
				389	18	1
Extra Series { For back years ...	70	3	8			
For 1883	178	18	1			
	249	1	9			
Less Commission on Sales	13	15	0			
				235	6	9
Reprints	...	...		1	18	4
				£809	9	3

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
PRINTING ACCOUNT:—						
Original Series.						
No. 77. Mounting Beowulf Autotypes ...	25	0	0			
No. 78. English Wills (balance)	1	14	0			
No. 79. Orosius, Part I	126	1	5			
Epinal MS., 445 copies	80	0	0			
No. 80. St. Katherine (on account) ...	100	0	0			
				332	15	5
Extra Series.						
XL. Huon of Burdeux, Part I (balance)	5	6	0			
XLI. Huon of Burdeux, Part II	138	4	6			
Photo Intaglio plate of Lord Berners	13	9	6			
On account	24	1	9			
				181	1	9
Reprints.						
No. 11. Lyndesay's Monarche, Part I ...	34	4	9			
No. 19. Lyndesay's Monarche, Part II	51	11	6			
No. 37. Lyndesay's Satyre	19	17	6			
				105	13	9
COPYING AND COLLATING:—						
Original Series	11	8	3			
Extra Series	42	8	6			
				53	16	9
GENERAL ACCOUNT:—						
Binding	12	17	1			
Insurance	2	10	0			
Clerk	10	0	0			
Postage, Carriage, &c.	7	5	0			
Warehousing Stock, 1883	5	0	0			
				37	12	1
BALANCE AT BANK, 31st December, 1883 ...	91	19	0			
Petty Cash	6	10	6	98	9	6
				£809	9	3

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

FRED. D. MATTHEW
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Income and Expenditure of the EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY *for the Year ended December* 31, 1884.

RECEIPTS.

		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
BALANCE AT BANK, 1st January, 1884 ...		91	19	0			
Cash in hand		6	10	6	98	9	6
MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS:—							
Original Series	For back years ...	81	15	0			
	For 1884	333	10	4			
	For 1885, &c.	3	3	0			
		418	8	4			
Less Returned Subscriptions and Commission on Sales		8	3	0	410	5	4
Extra Series	For back years	50	18	4			
	For 1884	175	17	8			
		226	16	0			
Less Returned Subscriptions and Commission on Sales		14	13	0	212	3	0
Reprints		...	...		2	12	6
					£723	10	4

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
PRINTING ACCOUNT:—						
Original Series.						
Cursor Mundi	2	12	0			
No. 81. Piers Plowman, Part IV (on acc.)	84	0	1	86	12	1
Extra Series.						
XLII. Guy of Warwick, Part I (balance)	66	18	8			
XLIII. Huon, Part III	72	0	3			
XLIV. Four Sons of Aymon, Part I ...	122	2	0	261	0	11
Reprints.						
No. 11. Lyndesay's Monarche, Part I ...	14	0	0			
„ 19. Lyndesay's Monarche, Part II ...	17	8	9			
„ 37. Lyndesay's Satyre	15	18	3	47	7	0
COPYING AND COLLATING:—						
Original Series	12	2	3			
Extra Series	6	13	9			
Reprints	8	8	0	27	4	0
GENERAL ACCOUNT:—						
Warehousing Stock, 1884	5	0	0			
Insurance	2	10	0			
Clerk	10	0	0			
Postage and Carriage	5	2	9	22	12	9
BALANCE AT BANK, 31st December, 1884 ...	277	15	4			
Petty Cash	0	18	3	278	13	7
				£723	10	4

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

FRED. D. MATTHEW
A. GRANGER HUTT } AUDITORS.

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Income and Expenditure of the EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY *for the Year ended December* 31, 1885.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
BALANCE AT BANK, 1st January 1885 ...	277	15	4			
Cash in hand	0	18	3	278	13	7
MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS:—						
Original Series For back years	185	19	4			
Original Series For 1885	212	10	0			
Original Series For 1886	1	1	0			
	399	10	4			
Less Commission on Sales ...	20	0	0	379	10	4
Extra Series For back years	115	13	1			
Extra Series For 1885	148	8	4			
	264	1	5			
Less Commission on Sales ...	7	15	0	256	6	5
Reprints	...	...		3	3	0
				£917	13	4

PAYMENTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
PRINTING ACCOUNT:—						
Original Series.						
No. 81. Piers Plowman, Part IV (balance)	107	15	9			
,, 82. Aelfric's Lives of Saints, Part II	136	15	9	244	11	6
Reprints.						
No. 1. E. Eng. Alliterative Poems (balance)	6	0	6			
,, 4. Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight	9	7	6			
,, 17. Parallel Extracts from MSS. of Piers Plowman	6	15	6	22	3	6
Reports, &c.	...	...		14	1	6
Copying for O. S. and E. S.	...	...		33	0	9
GENERAL ACCOUNT:—						
Insurance	2	10	0			
Clerk	10	0	0			
Postage and Packing, &c.	3	11	1	16	1	1
BALANCE AT BANK, 31st December, 1885 ...	582	8	6			
Petty Cash	5	6	6	587	15	0
				£917	13	4

Examined with the Vouchers and found correct.

FRED. D. MATTHEW, A. GRANGER HUTT } AUDITORS.

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, TREASURER.
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(*With power to add Workers to their number.*)

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